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Identical letters dated 9 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to draw your attention to a troubling escalation in the firing of rockets and mortars at Israel from the Gaza Strip, which provides yet another clear example of Hamas' destabilizing role in our region.

Since 14 July 2011, terrorists in Gaza have launched some 16 rockets and 6 mortars into southern Israel, deliberately targeting Israeli civilians and causing injuries. For example, on 1 August 2011, terrorists fired a rocket into the area near Kibbutz Yad Mordechai, injuring a 55-year-old woman. On 4 August 2011, five more civilians were injured when a rocket landed in close proximity to Ashkelon — a major city home to more than 100,000 people. Other attacks in the past month have occurred in or around other areas with large civilian populations, including the city of Kiryat Gat, Mosahv Kfar Maimon, Kibbutz Zikim and Kibbutz Kfar Aza.

These attacks — a flagrant violation of international law — must be addressed with the utmost seriousness and resolve. It is no mystery why terrorists continue to operate with impunity in Gaza. The violence that continues to flow from the Gaza Strip reveals the true face of Hamas, which cannot be hidden beneath the mask of a unity agreement.

The continuous barrage of rocket fire into Israel is fuelled by the illegal smuggling of arms into Gaza. Preventing this activity — an integral part of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) — does not receive the attention that it deserves from the international community.

Israel holds Hamas fully responsible for all attacks emanating from Gaza, where it remains in de facto control. In response to these attacks, Israel has exercised and will continue to exercise its right to self-defence, as appropriate, and will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens. Israel expects the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the international community to clearly condemn all of these terrorist attacks, sending a firm message to Hamas and its patrons, which seek to escalate conflict in our region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ron **Prosor**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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